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ABSTRACT

Faced with an evolving enemy threat, the U.S. must adapt to retain flexibility and selectivity in future engagements. Accordingly, readiness to project power, globally and in a timely fashion, must be seriously considered. Through an emphasis on increasing expeditionary capabilities, emerging global partnerships, and future sealift technologies, the United States will be able to continue to rapidly project power globally in 2020 with minimal impact from the planned reduction of permanent presence overseas.

This study leads off with a fictional future scenario that paints a word picture of the key themes. Next, the opportunities and challenges of the cornerstones of rapid power projection are explored: redefining an expeditionary culture; working with emerging global partnerships; and exploiting the "blue highway." Anticipated shortfalls and potential solutions are then offered with an emphasis placed on action - revised mindset shift, broad vision, and flexible execution - to achieve a decisive impact now. Finally, the conclusion emphasizes the impact that a more comprehensive application of the overall national power tools will have in enabling the decisive employment of future U.S. power projection.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Major David L. Odom, USMC is currently a student at the U.S. Marine Corps School of Advanced Warfighting in Quantico, Virginia. A 1991 graduate of the Citadel with a Bachelor of Arts degree in English, he is also a 2004 distinguished graduate of the U.S. Marine Corps Command and Staff College with a Master of Military Studies degree.

A career infantry officer, Major Odom has served in various command, staff and instructor assignments. Prior to attending school, he was the executive officer for 3d Battalion, 8th Marines. Following graduation, Major Odom will report for duty with the Marine Air Ground Task Force Staff Training Program (MSTP) in Quantico, Virginia.

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Selective Expeditionary Power: Setting Conditions to Rapidly Achieve Decisive Battle in 2020

Operation QUICKSTRIKE (a fictional future scenario for U.S. power projection).

In 2020, a conflict situation emerges in China, a recent global competitor for the United States, over the Taiwan Straits (Taiwan, a global economic power, wants a separate, but equal status with China proper). The U.S. is alerted to the situation through diplomatic means (the virtual embassy in China...the ambassador and his diplomatic team work from the U.S. and deploy as necessary to China to represent U.S. interests...video-teleconferencing and other technological means enable this ability to maintain presence, promote U.S. interests, and yet retain a higher measure of force protection and an economy of force within the Department of State). Additionally, the U.S. is alerted through other informational and economic channels of the digressing situation there. Military power, in the form of a brigade-sized, joint task force (built for deployment into the western Pacific region) is afloat in the area of operations.

The first phase of the crisis is addressed by the regional powers: Japan and a unified Korea in the northeast, Russia in the north, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in the southeast, and India in the southwest. As the regional powers are dealing with China through their own applications of Diplomacy, Information, Military and Economic actions (DIME), the U.S. is monitoring the situation, posturing another amphibious brigade for deployment from Hawaii and Guam, as well as calling markers with Vietnam (ports and airfields), Philippines (ports and airfields), Pakistan (ports and airfields), Tajikistan (airfields), and Russia (ports and airfields) in preparation for sustaining a large deployment to the region, as necessary. Additionally, steps are taken with both informational and economic measures to ensure that China knows which side the U.S. will "cast its vote" with if China defies the desires of the other regional powers.

Next, the regional powers bring their requests for assistance to the United Nations. Within this forum, the U.S. offers to commit manpower, resources, and whatever else is required to assist in resolving/managing the crisis. At this point, continental U.S. (CONUS) airpower projection is made available and additional forces are identified to support operations. The Maritime Propositioning Force (MPF) and the Army Prepositioned Afloat (APA) are moved out of Guam and Diego Garcia, enroute to pre-determined staging areas in the area of operations.

Task forces linkup with this shipping in both Guam and Diego Garcia prior to sailing for the establishment of the sea base in international waters...ensuring an initial footprint of two division (minus) (reinforced) are made available to support the operation immediately...with more to flow as necessary and dependent on the support of other partners in the area of operations. To reduce force protection issues prior to combat ashore, the force - minus necessary ground recon assets - is retained at sea until decisions are made to attack, as necessary. Shaping continues throughout this buildup in the form of heavy information/influence operations.

After failure of China to adhere to U.N. and regional demands, the United States -employing power projected from CONUS, the sea and through regional access - leads the regional powers who are reinforced by U.S. power coming from the sea and CONUS to neutralize the crisis. Depending on the time required, the U.S. will be postured to rapidly turn the situation over to follow-on U.N and regional authorities in order to quickly re-distribute U.S. forces, redeploy to home stations, conduct readiness and maintenance, and posture for the next crisis to come.

Introduction.

"We will strongly resist aggression from other great powers - even as we welcome their peaceful pursuit of prosperity, trade, and cultural advancement. Finally, the United States will use this moment of opportunity to extend the benefits of freedom across the globe. We will actively work to bring the hope of democracy, development, free markets, and free trade to every corner of the world. The events of September 11, 2001, taught us that weak states, like Afghanistan, can pose as great a danger to our national interests as strong states. Poverty does not make poor people into terrorists and murderers. Yet poverty, weak institutions, and corruption can make weak states vulnerable to terrorist networks and drug cartels within their borders."

In August 2004, the United States announced that it was preparing to reorganize its force posture, which was built around post-World War II and Cold War security concerns, in order to better align the force for the conduct and prevention of both current and future warfare. As the first major attempt to realign the capabilities for power projection of American forces in over 60 years, the ramifications for how the U.S. will project its military power in 2020 are staggering. Faced with an evolving enemy threat which is increasingly more diverse, diffuse, and regional in nature, the U.S. must also adapt to retain flexibility and selectivity in picking and choosing future engagements and battles. Accordingly, American readiness to project power to conduct both symmetric and asymmetric warfare, globally and in a timely fashion, must be seriously considered. Through an emphasis on increasing expeditionary capabilities, emerging global partnerships, and future sealift technologies, the United States will be able to continue to rapidly project power globally in 2020 with minimal impact from the planned reduction of permanent presence overseas.

Re-defining an Expeditionary Culture.

Current initiatives in this reorganization point to a reduction of over 100,000 personnel from both the European and Pacific Combatant Commands. Additionally, the current plan

advocates, at least initially, an increase in expeditionary deployments of smaller, more agile joint forces in order to exploit emerging global partnerships and technological advances to maintain relevance and/or dominance. In consideration of these planned reductions, enhanced expeditionary capabilities will be essential in 2020. Additionally, this drawdown in the overseas footprint will force the development of more flexible and adaptive basing in order to react to unexpected enemy actions, scenarios, and situations. Also, this reduction in footprint will require a renewed emphasis on "predicting" – or at least anticipating through detailed study and analysis – future crisis "hotspots" so that we can better employ the DIME weapons of engagement diplomacy and economic interdependence to prevent and/or mitigate developing situations.

While the military of 2004 radiated from hubs in Germany, Japan, and Korea, 2020 will find the military operating out of more remote sites, possibly places such as Turkmenistan, Central African Republic, and Vietnam. Renewed alliances and revamped base infrastructure will also advance potential power projection nodes in Guam, the Philippines, and Panama. These remote basing locations will be flexible and focused to the rising threats around the world where the U.S. needs to be at the point of impact and/or decision in order to influence events. Many of these emerging threats rise from conditions related to the rise of Islamic influence that could trigger anti-western feelings; the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) and global/regional narco- trafficking.

In order to meet the requirements of the continuing Global War on Terrorism and prevent regional conflict, the military must be able to continue to provide flexible deterrence options.

Specifically, the capability to surge scalable military power at a moment's notice is essential.

While drawing the preponderance of military combat power back to CONUS enables better force

protection and sustainment, expeditionary operations will enable the U.S. to posture itself to continue to address global concerns and interests.

Going expeditionary will be a joint force combat multiplier, enabling smaller force packages to deploy globally while retaining a larger reserve capability to respond to major contingencies as necessary. iv In an October 2004 article, President George W. Bush stated that

"More of our troops will be stationed and deployed from here at home. We'll move some of our troops and capabilities to new locations, so they can quickly deal with new threats. We'll take advantage of the 21^{st} century military technologies to rapidly deploy increased firepower."

To enable this in 2020, our expeditionary forces must be lighter and less dependent on host nation support. We will seek to maintain theater engagement through aggressive diplomatic, economic and informational plans, while capitalizing on our existing and planned U.S.

Transportation Command capabilities to deploy forces into the littorals and beyond.

The human factors cost in realigning the force is delicate. For many, drawing forces back to CONUS will appear to be a sign of consolidating the position; to others, it will be a sign of weakness in disengaging from world affairs. In both instances, well-orchestrated informational campaigns must be the first weapon of choice in global power projection to retain the initiative in world affairs. The management of perceptions - a weakness in the early years of the 21st century - must evolve by 2020 to be the number one weapon in the military arsenal.

Since the beginning of conflict, information campaigns have been conducted. Usually, these campaigns were focused on achieving a particular human reaction, normally that of fighting, fleeing, posturing or submitting. With the continued reliance on the destructive power of modern weapon systems, experience in information operations has dwindled. Only recently with the heavy involvement of American forces in Operations ENDURING FREEDOM and IRAQI FREEDOM has the subject made any significant forward progress again.

In 2020, "influence operations" – a broad, non-doctrinal term which encompasses and synchronizes various aspects of public affairs, public diplomacy, military deception and information operations – sets the environment of strategic communications and shapes conditions for successful expeditionary campaigns^{vii}. The U.S. must continue to create a perception of global influence that is crafted and shaped within an overarching influence campaign plan. The perception in 2004 was that of global hegemony. In 2020, the perception story is that of an American military that is going to improve a situation, leveraging regional powers and regional interests, while bringing the staying power and might to employ as necessary to accomplish the mission.

Expeditionary power projection will back up information operations through the timely deployment of modular, task-organized forces around the globe. Focused on exploiting the potential of the theater engagement plan concept and similar to the Marine Expeditionary Unit construct of 2004, these joint, and sometimes combined, task forces will deploy to remote portions of the world – such as Poland, Guam, Panama, Chad, Tajikistan – to promote U.S. interests abroad, conduct bi-lateral training with other militaries, and provide a presence in unexpected – but calculated - places of interest to the United States. Supported by sea and air forces – as appropriate – these flexible, scalable forces will demonstrate national resolve to engage remote regions of the world, showcasing the might and power projection capabilities of the United States. These forces will further maximize emerging alliances and existing agreements in order to enable the co-usage of host nation ports, airfields, and resources. Additionally, these forces will be equipped with the latest technology – ranging from new command and control capabilities to new and lighter forms of logistics – all leveraging these

emerging technologies to enable a smaller, more agile force to retain the potency of a more robust, larger, yet similar combat force in 2004. viii

Emerging Global Partnerships.

The evolution of the Global War on Terrorism – particularly "coalition of the willing" actions in Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003 - has showcased the fact that the U.S. has few close friends, mainly the United Kingdom and Australia in the early 21st century By 2020, it will be the norm for the U.S. to continue to develop existing close relationships, while also focusing on the development of numerous, loose global partnerships and alliances that emphasize more of a "quid pro quo" business relationship: An environment where the relationship revolves around providing a requirement, and/or need, for services, security, money or all of the above. Often, the U.S. has extended its services in exchange for favors, either immediate ones or markers that will be called upon in the future, in order to best support U.S. needs and concerns. Ideally based on common interests and shared values, current global partnerships have more often than not, demonstrated themselves to be based on the quid pro quo model laid out above. This situation will magnify in 2020; however, as the U.S. more fully realizes the true nature of its role in future partnerships, opportunities will emerge that were not present in 2004.

Events in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Philippines, and Colombia – with the requisite supporting cast of contributing neighbor states and nations around these centers of 21st century conflict – offer some insight for the direction that the U.S. will need to go in order to retain the initiative to deal with anticipated conflict and unforeseen global crisis in 2020. Additionally, new friendships have emerged to support these crisis centers, such as in Qatar to support Middle East operations; Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Pakistan to support Afghanistan operations; Guam (a U.S. territory, this will be a dominate cog in 2020 Pacific strategy) and Vietnam for Philippine

operations; and Chile for Colombian operations. In each of these situations, the United States will forge new hubs of American power that will be based on shared-security interests, as well as a flood of American dollars. In order to further "sweeten the pot," the United States will extend shared training/education for military forces, shared technology for those who comply, and further opportunities for even more American support if requested services are properly rendered. Existing programs, such as International Military Education and Training (IMET); Joint Combined Exercises and Training (JCET); Foreign Military Financing (FMF); and Exercise-Related Construction - specific tools in the Theater Security Cooperation "kit bag" must emerge as major elements in future plans to develop and exploit these successful partnerships. ix As a form of hedging our bets, the relationships in each case are flexible and can be collapsed quickly – creating more of a business-like flavor to the environment than those that we maintained throughout most of the later portion of the 20th century in Japan and Germany, where we sought to establish friendships and trust with former enemies. Additionally, these flexible partnerships capitalize on aggressive U.S. diplomacy; operate within an umbrella of information operations and shaping; adapt to military requirements to manage conflict; and focus directly on addressing the immediate needs of much of the world through economics/money to mold conditions in favor of U.S. aims.

This more modular and expeditionary form of American basing enables more responsiveness of the force to global crisis. Faced with a more diffuse and flexible threat, it is imperative that we retain the initiative through the ability to quickly deploy, employ and sustain forces in this type of evolving situation. Where the enemy goes, we must be able to follow.

Uniquely, the U.S. in 2020 will have the ability to assist in the national power maturation (diplomatic, informational, military and economic) of several nations in the world, with a mutual

effect of power projection as a direct result. In addition to the nations already mentioned, opportunities abound in Tunisia, Djibouti, Cameroon and South Africa for creating nodes that are friendly to U.S. power projection as well as potential sites for shaping stability in that part of the world. Other alliances will continue to emerge through 2020, in places such as Poland, Georgia, Turkmenistan and Brazil. In all cases, the common bonds of these emerging global partnerships are not necessarily shared values or even common interests. The linkage is mutually beneficial business relationships that have the potential to mature into friendships but not a requirement for "sealing the deal."

The ability of the U.S. to project power will be further enhanced in 2020 through the development of regional powers that can be augmented by the U.S. to leverage specific strategic or even global decisions, but regional powers that do not need the U.S. to deal with local matters. Between 2004 and 2020, as the U.S. repositions itself for the future, it must ensure that it builds up the confidence and capabilities of current relationships in order for those nations to venture out on their own without the direct support of the U.S. South Korea is a prime example of this "growing up" process. After fifty-plus years of American aid and assistance, not only are they ready to step up to the challenges on the peninsula (which may be moot in 2020 due to possible reunification by then*), but the Korea that emerges must be ready to equally perform on the regional stage. Japan, while dealing with self-defense growing pains in the early 21st century, must re-new its warrior culture in order to project itself regionally as a military strength that can protect its vast technological and economic advances.

These are just two examples; however, it is apparent in 2020 that the development of regional powers that are not dependent on the U.S. will enhance the ability of the U.S. to focus its power projection, when needed and called upon, to decisively shift the balance in favor of our

interests when required. This form of power projection -to develop and augment regional powers - will require a mindset shift in 2020 from that of global cop to that of global sheriff. Through a sheriff's role that rests upon political regional support/access ("elected" by the people/nation being assisted), the U.S. can perform in a more influential vice directive fashion. Additionally, the U.S. can focus more on preserving the peace rather than just the enforcement of law.

New business-like relationships, more global assistance to developing friendships in new regions of the world, and more focus on regional rather than global power, will all offer opportunities for the U.S. to exploit. Additionally, when coupled with the overall savings achieved through an economy of force in shrinking manpower/resources back to CONUS, the U.S. can better sharpen its expeditionary capabilities and explore new trails and untapped resources for power projection. Ultimately, core American strengths will be renewed and refined through these new global partnerships, the leveraging of technology, and the advancement of airlift and sealift to increase expeditionary prowess for the joint force. Sea power is one such cornerstone that future U.S. power projection will be built upon.

Sea basing: Exploiting the "Blue Highway."

Anti-access and limited host-nation support, by 2020, will have further refined the sheer requirement for the U.S. to exploit emerging fast sealift concepts and forcible entry capability. xi With a focused lens on maritime concepts such as "fast" propositioning ships and high speed ferry-type craft, the U.S. must seek platforms and capabilities that further exploit current and planned expeditionary power projection, while validating the reduction and reliance placed on permanent overseas basing in 2020.

Maritime Prepositioning Force (MPF) ships established themselves in the early 1990s and validated their contribution to power projection during major conflicts in Iraq (1991 and 2003), and, to a lesser extent, in Somalia (1993). Modern inclusion of the MPF and the Army Prepositioned Afloat (APA) ships into various war plans further emphasize their impact on the entry and sustainment capabilities of U.S. military power. This maritime propositioning multiplier, when married with the ability to assemble and maintain the force at sea, provides an unparalleled strength for power projection on a global scale in 2020. Additionally, a renewed emphasis on the ocean for the sustainment of that power projection will be a combat accelerator as an enabler in allowing the U.S. sustained access: when and where it needs it. The keys for achieving the sea basing concept in 2020 are fast ships, high-speed ferries, and more interoperability and jointness within the force to streamline maintenance/repair requirements.

Fast prepositioning ships, such as the MPF (Future) [MPF (F)], are necessary to reduce the sail times in support of emerging crisis and/or global conflict. Xii U.S. force posture in 2020 will demand air and sealift abilities that can quickly build combat power. Ideally, this will be directly from the continental U.S. to combat operations, thus eliminating the burden of past requirements for assembly areas and staging points. The ideal will be tough to achieve by 2050, let alone 2020; however, faster and more robust lift will enable more flexibility and options for the projection of that power. Xiii Additionally with regards to sealift, though the availability of ports for repair, refitting and sustainment will continue to be desirable in 2020, the intent is to reduce/eliminate the requirement for port access from other nations and countries. By reducing/eliminating the needs for ports, anti-access issues of the early 21st century are marginalized. Additionally, when coupled with the support of the U.S. to its new global

partnerships as needed, the effectiveness of anti-access policies upon the U.S. will also be reduced.

The application of fast ships must be for troop lift, as well as combat support and sustainment. High-speed ferries, utilized in the earlier part of this century for intra-theater lift support, must be expanded and integrated into the overall sea basing construct. Additionally, these high-speed ferries must be able to provide a limited capability to reduce inter-theater lift, or at least be able to better augment it. Furthermore, MPF (F) type ships for troop lift have to be made available as well. Plans in 2004 focused on brigade-sized lift – fine for the concept of smaller, more agile and expeditionary joint task forces – but in 2020, many of these ships will not be on-line yet and the requirement will be there to re-think how existing amphibious shipping (LHDs, LHAs, LPDs, and LSDs) can be modified to support power projection application. By 2020, the Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) template – enlarged and evolved to reflect a Joint-Interagency Expeditionary Brigade equivalent force - for forward-deployed, amphibious power projection will represent the baseline "mold" for building joint task forces with more expeditionary operational flavor as has been previously discussed in this paper.

The application of resources in 2004 and soon thereafter will be the deciding factor in ensuring that the U.S. has the fast troop lift necessary in 2020 for power projection. Realistically, the U.S., in 2020, will be "making mission" with an assortment of modified shipping, not necessarily built or designed for the requirements that will be levied on it. Utilizing high-speed ferry technology and a vast level of amphibious expeditionary experience resident in the Navy and Marine Corps, fiscal resourcing will be the "long-pole in the tent" here, but it needs to materialize in order to project power smartly in 2020^{xiv}.

Another pillar of the enhanced sealift requirements for 2020 will be on the ability to project power, "on-demand." With the resourcing of the necessary equipment and shipping discussed previously, this ability for on-demand power will enable the U.S. to leverage its other tools of national power (DIE) in order to focus combat power at the decisive time and place. By 2020, sea basing will still be emerging, though it will be limited to the capabilities of the shipping and resources that will be available through fiscal allocations and provided to the Operating Forces by that time. In order to best project an evolving U.S. power projection capability, renewed emphasis in 2020 will be placed on shaping events through DIE. This shaping will facilitate the best conditions for the application of sea basing to crisis and/or conflict.

Shortfalls and Issues for 2020.

Power projection in 2020 will not just depend on new technologies, doctrines and/or approaches to conflict. An entirely new focus on all the tools of national power (DIME) will be essential to leveraging all of the facets in order to retain the United States' current position on the world stage. The National Security Strategy (NSS), now and for the coming future, should provide the unifying guidance for a focused strategic plan for waging future war. Proper application and employment of DIME enables us – quite literally – to always be present to influence on the world stage in a variety of scalable capacities. The critical link here is the formulation of a cohesive, integrated, multi-agency and diplomatic plan – directly linked to a security engagement plan led by the Department of Defense – that enables the execution of power projection when the decision is made. The venue for this formula is a clearly articulated National Security Strategy.

This unified, joint plan of action for power projection requires the application of flexible minds and unique approaches to the problem: It is the one thing that we can be sure of achieving – if we are willing – with the available resources now and the impact of such a shift can be decisive. The other aspects of the military power table (expeditionary capabilities, global partnerships, and sealift technologies) will all take longer than 15 years to fully mature, but they will also require the same revised mindset, broad vision and flexible execution in order to reach their respective potentials and success.

The reorganization of the American global footprint, which is ongoing in 2004 and should be complete by 2020, must be seen through an expeditionary lens in order to be relevant. Old partnerships and alliances must be reviewed and enhanced, or discarded as appropriate. Through these relationships, we can provide stability and depth. Concurrently, new global partnerships - as we have seen quickly forged under shared crisis and duress during Operations ENDURING FREEDOM and IRAQI FREEDOM – offer new paths and opportunities for the future. Coupling the old and the new, we must continue to build relationships, as previously discussed and as supported by the current shared experience with the Global War on Terrorism, and ensure these relationships continue to serve as the catalyst for change in this arena for the next 15 years.

Expeditionary trends, such as the new STRYKER brigades of the Army and the Expeditionary Strike Forces of the Air Force and the Navy/Marine Corps team must be better integrated to ensure overall readiness, economy of force and reduced redundancy of efforts and resources. Within this theme of expeditionary operations, it is important that these platforms and capabilities retain flexibility to fight at all ends of the spectrum of combat, both asymmetric and symmetric.

Basing must be more oriented and postured to support the deployment and sustainment of the joint force for a mission, and then flexible enough to collapse and return to home station in CONUS. This will not only increase our deployable capabilities, but will increase our combat readiness and provide overall enhanced force protection. The economic advantages within the U.S. by this re-posturing of forces will be welcomed as well.

Forced reviews of basing and troop positioning by the current presidential administration will also set the wheels in motion that will shape American presence well into the 21st century. This must be seriously analyzed by the current military and diplomatic leadership - from a joint and not service-oriented perspective - to ensure we have the right mix, in the right places, for 2020 and beyond.

Finally, in a span of 15 years, the amphibious shipping will not fully materialize. This is a shortfall which must be planned for now. New ways to utilize current military shipping, as well as civilian shipping, must be anticipated. Additionally, the fiscal resources must be allocated for the sea basing concept in the near future if we are even to begin achieving some of its potential for power projection by 2020.^{xv}

Conclusion.

In 2020, the United States will be able to apply all three legs of the power projection table – expeditionary capabilities, new global partnerships, and new sealift technologies – within an umbrella of overall national power capabilities (DIME) in order to resolve situations globally with the requisite amount of power required. Better application of DIME will enable the U.S. to pick-and-choose how the various elements of power projection are employed: whether individually to deal with a specific issue or situation; sequentially to address a developing

conflict or to manage a crisis; or simultaneously, to deliver a decisive blow, when and where the U.S. chooses to resolve a conflict.

The U.S. will not have all of the desired capabilities in place by 2020, but it will have a large enough tool bag to apply existing tools - in new ways - to achieve power projection results. Through an emphasis on expeditionary capabilities, emerging global partnerships, and future sealift technologies, the United States will continue to rapidly project power globally in 2020 with minimal impact from the planned reduction of permanent presence overseas.

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